

love richer soils. The cowslip and oxlip (*Primula veris* and *P. elatior*) in addition to increasing crowds of buttercups. Of the latter St. Mark's or St. Anthony's turnip (*Ranunculus tuberosus*) is the commonest—easy to be recognised by the turnip-like swelling of the stem, which has earned for it its popular name, as well as by the reflexed or bent-backed yellow sepals beneath the flowers. In more southerly counties that sweetest of English flowers, with its lovely rosette of exquisitely-shaped leaves, and stems with granulous roots, each as capable of producing a new plant as a seed—the meadow saxifrage—(*Saxifraga granulosa*) is abundant enough in places to whiten the meadows. The "sweeps" (as Lancashire and Yorkshire children call the dark-petalled flowers of *Luzula campestris*) is abounding everywhere. The "cuckoo flower" (*Cardamine pratensis*), also known as the "lady's smock" ("Our Lady" gave nearly as many names to early summer flowers as the "cuckoo"), with its pale lilac tints, "crowds the meadows with delight." Yet another name for it (and a good one) is the "May flower," especially known as such in the northern counties.

The wood sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*) and blue hyacinth are abounding in the moist woods. The three-leaved saxifrage (*Saxifraga tri dactylites*) crowds old walls; the meadow orchis (Shakspeare's "Long Purples")—*Orchis morio*—in the richest soils of the richest fields gives the landscape a reddish tinge. The field madder is crowding the young cornfields; the hogweeds in the luxuriant hedgerows are providing artists with magnificent leaves for "foregrounds." The hedges are in places adorned with blossoming bird cherries; and at their bases the "wake robin," "lords and ladies," "cuckoo pint," &c. (*Arum maculatum*) grows with equally luxuriance and artistic suggestiveness. The grasses are coming into flower in the thickening fields; the sedges (easy to be recognised by their triangular stems) by the brook and stream sides.

Verily, life is worth living when it is in keen sympathy with other life—not else! The flood-tide is now rolling; the Lord's chariots are crowding the hillsides! Are there enough servants of the Prophet to behold them with unscaled eyes? If not, science comes to such with miraculously unsealing power. The scales drop off; lo, the Lord of Life is present, and we bow at His footstool!

## Observations and Experiments in Education.

BY MRS. SOUTHWOOD HILL.\*

### No. I.—INFANCY.

The child's head rested on her arm, and his deep blue eyes were fixed upon her face, with a gaze so enquiring, and yet so confiding, that her eye fell beneath his, and her heart trembled as it would have done if some heavenly being had come under the form of childhood, and asked her to guide him pure, and more than ever exalted, through this mortal life.

"My beautiful!" said she, "why dost thou scan every lineament of my face, as if I were thy destiny, and thou wouldst read it before beginning to fulfil it? How thoughtful is thy brow, even now, and how much stronger thy will than thy power!—the eye longs for the curl that my bending head brings near thee, but the little hand knows not yet how to reach the mark. Such is the fate that must attend thee through life! Such is the difficulty of arriving at the good we see and desire, that even as I press thee to my heart, and vow myself to thy service, and picture to myself the being I would make thee, I know not the means by which thou art to become that being!"

Thus spoke the young mother; and she fell into a long reverie; and dark mists interposed themselves whenever she would have built up a system of education. At length, she

\*It cannot but interest our readers to know the principles and methods laid down for her own guidance by the mother of a lady eminent in philanthropic work; and we are grateful to Mrs. Hill for the sketch she most kindly places in our hands, with the assurance that, at this day, she sees little to alter. To get at the conceptions of parental duty formed by the parents of our great and good men and women should help us infinitely in the study of Education.—ED.



resolved to try to become a child, to enter into the child's nature, and merely to lend it the aid of her physical strength and of her affection.

The next morning after she had come to this determination, she heard loud cries issuing from the nursery. Upon going into the room, she saw the baby kicking and screaming, while the nurse was vainly endeavouring to tie on his cap. She reflected that it must be very bad for him to have this daily irritation; and, upon consulting good medical authority, found that the cap might safely be left off, as the weather was hot. It was impressed upon her, however, that warmth is much needed by the young infant; and she was told that for this reason the babies in India are very beautiful, and thrive well. Having abandoned the cap during the summer, it was never resumed, notwithstanding the ill-concealed derision of her visitors, and the advice of her friends. Her eye soon became accustomed to the little bare head, and she found her child less subject to cold than is usual with children; and during the time of cutting his teeth, the feverishness always attendant upon that process was much mitigated. Her next care was to invent a dress so simple as to slip on in a minute, and which, leaving his limbs unfettered, should yet have that warmth which the young being requires. She succeeded so well that beaming looks and joyful crows were substituted for the face swollen with rage and pain, and the perpetual cries which usually had accompanied his toilet.

A few mornings afterwards, there was another bustle in the nursery: the babe screamed worse than ever; and there was a running and changeable accompaniment by the nurse, of coaxing, flattering, scolding, and singing. The reason of the uproar, was, that the baby had been dipped in water which was too cold. "I shall bathe him myself, in future," said the mother to herself; "for in this way, both mind and body suffer."

As soon as the baby was dressed, his food was brought in; and "Here it is!" cried the nurse, in a tone which implied—Here comes the sovereign cure for all your wounds. "Worse and worse!" thought the mother; "and yet I shall never be able to make the nurse feel what I mean. I must turn nurse myself."

Upon stating the case to her husband, he, like a true father, cordially agreed with her that she must dedicate herself to the child. "I have my work in the world," said he; "you should

have yours: every wife, if she have no children to educate, should find something else to do, besides the poor selfishness of providing for her own and her husband's daily comforts by settling the domestic arrangements. For my part, I shall gladly accommodate myself to any plan which will render the performance of your duty to your child easy to you; and, by-and-by, I should think that my share of the business will become the larger. As it is not right, however, for both our sakes, that you should be wholly engrossed with the boy, find out some good-tempered and sensible girl, whom you can train to help you in the more mechanical part. For the first few months, perhaps, it may be advisable to trust only to yourself." So the affair was settled, and the nurse was dismissed.

To some, the following detail may seem minute and trifling; but such will not be the opinion of those who have learned by experience, how the physical leads to the moral, and how impossible it is to alter the one without altering the other.

The mother then began her labours, setting out with the resolution to watch the child's true wants—to help him to satisfy them, but strictly to refrain from forcing him on to acquirements of which *she* might wish to see him possessed.

He was every morning dipped, and every night washed, in a bath of summer heat; and so far from crying, as he had formerly done, he seemed to delight in these operations. Perhaps an infant is conscious of the moral feeling towards him long before we are aware that he is so; and very likely this child distinguished between the light, firm, rapid, tender touch of his mother, and the rough, clumsy, angry way in which he was handled by the nurse, when irritated and half-deafened by the screams which her own awkwardness had called forth.

His mother's watchful love perceived his wants before they had become so pressing as to require him to resort to screams and violence in order to gain attention. He was never allowed to wait too long for his food, nor was he given too much at once; nor half-suffocated by the way in which it was administered; nor did a triumphant "Here it comes!" announce its arrival. It was given to him regularly, moderately, slowly. When he became able to feed himself, he did not lose the good habits of his babyhood; he never thought of his food until he saw it, and then he took it quietly and cleanly, looking about him, and talking to his mother. Often, before he was two



years old, has he stopped in the middle of a meal, and, touching each flower in a tumbler that stood near him, asked "What is it?" and as she answered "rose," "lily," &c., he would catch up the sound; and when he had learnt as many of the names as he wished, he would go on eating.

When he cried, his mother endeavoured to discover the cause of his suffering, and to remove it; but she never tried to amuse him when he was screaming, or even to soothe him, further than by that gentle manner of holding him, or doing whatever was to be done for him, which is peculiar to affection. She never said "Hush!" or spoke at all when he cried. The consequence was that he was scarcely ever heard to cry; never, after he could speak his wants and feelings. He learnt to bear pain better than most men. When he was teething, his flushed cheek and curled lip often showed that he was in extreme pain, while no sound escaped him. When he was teaching himself to walk, he often got tumbles and knocks; generally he was quite still, and, as it were, surprised to find himself in his fallen condition; sometimes he would utter a little "Oh!"—not an impatient "Oh!" or a painful "Oh!" but an "Oh!" which said, "So, here I am! well, it is very curious how I came here." All the while the mother was thinking, "I wish I could bear all these blows." If he really got into such a case as required her help, she quietly went and extricated him partly, always leaving him to help himself out a little, by which he acquired the habit, and in a wonderful degree, the power, of righting himself when he got into difficulties. It is often fright which makes children cry when they fall, more than pain; and his mother therefore avoided running hastily to his help. She was particularly calm in her manner when any accident happened. But accidents rarely did occur; first of all, because she never said to him, "Take care!" and so he took care of himself, and never attempted things much or dangerously beyond his strength; secondly, because she took pains so to dispose the furniture, his bed, and everything with reference to him, that he was safe without that constant watching which is, on various accounts, so bad for children. As his parents meant him to have, from his very birth, the feeling of liberty, all the arrangements were strictly made for that purpose; the drawing-room with its paraphernalia was not for him, so he was saved the incessant fire of "Don't, don't!" to which children are for the most part

subjected, and which entails many bad consequences—the vanity caused by consciousness of being a constant object of attention; the irritation of being constantly thwarted; the sense of loss of liberty of action, &c. It was long before it was necessary to say "Don't!" because, without saying a word, the physical weakness of the child made it easy to put physical obstacles in the way of his doing what was hurtful; and by the time he had sense to wish, and strength to do his wishes, such confidence and love had been generated, that from them sprung coincidence of will in parent and child, so that a "Don't!" was never disputed.

The first thing that struck him was light—the candle; then he studied his mother's face; next he caught sight of some red curtains—the colour seemed very pleasing to him. As he grew older, motion became the most interesting: an animal running, or trees blown by the wind, or flowing water. Then came the wish to know structure; everything was peeped into or torn to pieces to be better understood: and when about a year and three-quarters old, the question was—function, "What for?"

When he was particularly intent upon observing some object, and turned upon his mother that enquiring look peculiar to infancy, and so affecting, she would show him some property of it; or, if she could do nothing better for him, she would tell him its name. She never told him the name of anything unless he were looking at it, and he always tried to repeat after her. As she never suffered him to be stunned with the chatter with which people think it necessary to overwhelm poor babies, but, on the contrary, short and simple sounds only were addressed to him, the consequence was, that he spoke faultlessly from the very beginning, and most beautifully, in deep, musical, true-hearted tones. She often would sing to him, but only her very choicest songs: he listened with delight to all, but particularly to such as were slow, swelling, sweet, and melancholy.

From the first month of his life, he lay almost constantly on a cloak on the floor, or, in fine weather, on the lawn; his mother judging this to be a more favourable position for him than the upright one, or than lying in bed, or on her lap. He soon learnt to raise himself upright, and he invented many curious modes of locomotion; such as rolling, crawling, &c., before he thought of walking. At last, one day, he saw a bright-coloured ball on a chair; he rolled to the chair and helping himself up by its



leg, then, for the first time stood upon his own little feet. His mother took the hint, and by placing various objects on a line of chairs, she induced him to exercise himself in balancing himself, and, finally, he ran alone. It is true, this great event did not occur till he was thirteen months old; but his limbs were straight, his gait firm, and, better than all, he had neither been coaxed nor threatened into unnatural exertions.

How can they say that man is naturally idle? That free child worked from morning till night, to the very fullest extent of his nature. The tendency of his first efforts seemed to be the attainment of the use of his muscles; it was just happiness enough for him for the first three months of his life to lie in the sun, and work about his little ivory limbs, and this he did, crowing with delight. Then he began to use his eyes very much. His first words after "Papa" and "Mamma," were "What is it?" not "What is its name?" and his mother did on all occasions try to answer him in the spirit of his question. If he pointed to a cow, she would take him to pat it, and see it milked, and drink of its milk; if to a bell, he was allowed to ring it. All his aims being of his own devising, he understood their value, and worked for them patiently; thus, from liberty, came industry, and true perseverance. When four months old, he sat for an hour trying to unroll a ball which his mother had wrapped up in a sheet of paper, and the little fingers and feet and mouth all worked away, and at last out rolled the ball. Luckily there was no sycophant by, to whine out "Clever little dear!" "Beautiful boy!" &c. Only the mother's eye bent in sympathy down to meet his upturned glance of joy, and the two understood each other. It was strange, and beautiful as strange, to see the perfect absence of self-consciousness in this young being—third blessed effect of liberty.

At first, it was the business of life, serious, and requiring all his energies, to roll a ball, move a chair round the room, watch the skeleton clock, or touch the notes of a piano; every moment brought its work, and every work increased the power of working; and slowly, but harmoniously, all the powers developed. No sooner could he do anything with his mother, than she allowed him his share; but she most carefully guarded against letting him over-fatigue himself, and never insisted upon his doing anything. At first, his natural activity, and afterwards, the charm that he found there was about her,

and in being with her, made the little occupations she gave him a delight. Too happy was he to be employed by her to shut the door, to run and call some one, to gather chickweed for the canary, or feed the poultry and pigeons; to hold the basket while she cut roses, and afterwards to arrange them in the sand in the bowl; to drop the seeds or roots into the ground when she had made the hole to receive them, or place the labels to show where they lay; or do any of those thousand daily things which an intelligent and loving mother will always gratify her child by letting him help to accomplish.

By being constantly with her, he acquired insensibly a great store of ideas, and now and then she would teach him to classify them. One day they brought in from their walk a large nosegay of wild flowers: "Will you bring me," said she, "a flower like this, out of the nosegay?" and she showed him a marsh marigold which she was in the act of putting into water. He brought her, successively, a marigold, buttercup, and dandelion; showing that the resemblance of colour had most struck him. He got the idea of two before he was two years old; and also of round. His mother taught him the last, by putting her finger, and drawing his, round the edge of a table, shilling, wafer, &c. He was very fond of looking at pictures, and of heaping wooden bricks on each other: in a word, the day seemed too short for his business; and his little life was like a wreath of flowers, ever fresh and smiling.

Thus did the mother lead her child through the first two years of his life; and if he had been happy and progressing, what had she been? Oh, who can measure her sum of joy, as she contemplated the result, or count the moments in which her heart had ached with bliss! When she looked at her boy, there was the sunny face, and candid brow, and dimpled mouth; there was the full eye, always sweet, but, by turns, serious in observation, or sparkling with mirth, or beaming with affection; there were the nimble foot and dexterous hand, even then good instruments of the active and enquiring mind; there was patient endurance of casual and necessary pain; and there was that love for her which was to be the basis of trust in man and God.

Nor had these years been to her a season of mere passive reception of happiness from her child; she had diligently been preparing for that which she had perceived would be required of her. She had foreseen that the outward universe would first



engage the child's curiosity, and she had been diligently studying the natural sciences, well aware that only the profoundly scientific are simple and clear, and that to them alone the commonest object in nature is instructive. It was of the facts of nature which passed before his eyes that he must first take cognisance; and, in order that she might never lose an opportunity of giving instruction, when asked to do so, or of directing his attention in a useful channel, she was well aware that she must herself be thoroughly enlightened and awakened. Besides the good at which she aimed, there were happy incidental results from these studies of hers. The first was, that they prevented the appearance (which she thought it most important to avoid) of being devoted to her child. She would sit at her desk for hours, absorbed in her studies, whilst the boy worked about the room or garden in a very independent manner. The second good effect was, that, through sympathy, he became interested in what his mother was thinking of, and he too, began to examine attentively, insects, flowers, &c.

Thus happily had passed two years, when the mother was removed from her boy. He passed into other hands, and became an altered being; for, as yet, he had no principles, nothing but sweet impulses.

The little hero of our tale was, then, taken into totally different circumstances. He was from morning till night tyrannised over. At first, he could not understand it. The harsh tone fell on his ear, but he did not heed it, nor obey it; he did not know it was meant for him: it was as if the dog had barked—a sound that struck his sense, but did not reach his intellect. It will be sufficient to mention one specimen of how he was treated; the rest will be easily imagined. One day, not understanding some order which he had not obeyed, his little hands were held as a punishment, which he smilingly endured, thinking they were held in love; this smile was construed into hardened guilt, and the sharpest reproaches were uttered, to make him aware that the intention was to pain and degrade him.

The miseries that flowed in cannot be told; but among them were fretfulness, passion, idleness, cowardice, deceit, malice. The canker was in the bud; or may we more truly say that the storm which tore to pieces and scattered the blossoms that had come forth, caused the tree to shoot more vigorously—that

this little creature was going through the process appointed for mankind—and that not only as regards the human race, but each individual, it is the plan of Providence that man should work out his salvation through evil? There is the question. However, it is needless to try to settle it: no one can tell what sort of being a man would be who should never have known evil. It is enough for us to be fully persuaded, that to work for good and by good is all that man should attempt.

